



Public Information Office
United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit
Office of the Circuit Executive · 95 7th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 · (415) 355-8800 · (415) 355-8901 Fax

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: David Madden (415) 355-8800

Ninth Circuit Alternative Dispute Resolution Awards Announced

SAN FRANCISCO – The Ninth Circuit ADR Committee recently announced the recipients of awards recognizing individual and institutional achievements in the field of alternative dispute resolution.

Susie Boring-Headlee, ADR coordinator for the United States District Court for the District of Idaho, was selected to receive the Robert F. Peckham Award for ADR Excellence, while the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, was chosen for the Ninth Circuit ADR Education Award.

Ms. Boring-Headlee, who has served as the ADR coordinator in the District of Idaho for the past four years, was recognized for promoting use of ADR in both the state and federal courts. She has served as a presenter and panelist at ADR workshops for judges; arranged for training of mediators in conjunction with the Northwest Institute of Dispute Resolution at the University of Idaho, College of Law; organized “settlement week” programs at the district court; and collaborated with information technology staff to streamline collection and management of ADR deadlines and other activities using the court’s electronic case filing system.

Since 2012, Ms. Boring-Headlee has served on the Federal Judicial Center's ADR Study Group, which is conducting an analysis of the costs, benefits, and effectiveness of ADR programs in the federal district courts. The study group will provide guidance to the national committees in determining best practices and future funding of court ADR programs.

McGeorge Law School is being recognized for its Center for Advocacy and Dispute Resolution, which offers a full spectrum of dispute resolution course work, including mediation, negotiation and online dispute resolution strategies. The center has made significant contributions to the Sacramento community through two unique mediation programs: the Prisoner Civil Rights

Mediation Clinic and the Housing Mediation Clinic. The clinics serve as a public-private partnership model for other legal institutions, as well as mediation training for the clinical students.

The housing mediation clinic, established in 2009 and located across the street from the Sacramento landlord-tenant court, provides student mediators for disputes involving unlawful detainer and eviction actions. Training at the center includes participation in mock mediation sessions, observing housing mediation sessions, and co-mediating housing cases. Students attend a weekly seminar taught in addition to their hours at the center.

Students involved in prisoner mediation have completed an ADR course and maintain a strong academic record. They receive training in interviewing skills and the law of Section 1983 prison condition claims. Two students interview the prisoner at the prison facility and then draft a bench memorandum for the magistrate judge with whom they conduct a co-mediation. The law students explore the underlying issues in the case and the prisoner's willingness to settle those issues. Students are able to co-mediate 8 to 10 sessions during the clinic experience, and the magistrate judge gives them increasing responsibility for mediating the cases.

Both the housing and prisoner mediation clinics provide a service to the community and a distinctive educational opportunity for the law students. McGeorge Law School emphasizes the collaborative mediation model and the skill of working in teams as the goals their programs achieve.

The Peckham and ADR Education awards were established in 2001 and 2005, respectively, by the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit, governing body of the federal courts in nine western states and two Pacific Island jurisdictions. The Peckham Award is named for the late Judge Peckham, a former chief district judge of the Northern District of California, who helped pioneer use of legal means other than court trials to resolve disputes.

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